

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification as amended below with replacement paragraphs shows added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 21, with the following paragraph:

An operator operates operational buttons of the image taking device 1 or a keyboard of the personal computer 6 so as to switch the image taking device 1 to an automatic shooting mode ~~(#1)~~S101. Then, the distance measuring sensor 27 is activated ~~(#2)~~S102 and starts measuring a distance between the image taking device 1 and an object placed at the front face thereof ~~(#3)~~S103. Note that the measurement is repeated until the exposure time is calculated ~~(#7)~~S107 or the process is finished at a predetermined time interval (for example, every 100 millisecond).

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 1, with the following paragraph:

If there is a change in the measurement result, it is determined that an object person appeared at the front face of the image taking device 1 (Yes in-~~#4~~ S104). The object person makes his or her cheek close to the front face of the image taking device 1. The image taking device 1 determines whether the position and the posture of the cheek become suitable for taking an image ~~(#5)~~S105.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 8, with the following paragraph:

If they are not suitable position and posture for taking an image (No in-~~#5~~ S105), the lamp 28 or a speaker is used for guiding the cheek to the suitable position and posture ~~(#6)~~S106. Then, the determination is repeated until the position and the posture of the cheek becomes suitable.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 13, with the following paragraph:

If all these conditions are satisfied (Yes in-~~#4~~ S104 and Yes in-~~#5~~ S105), the distance exposure table TL1 is referred for determining the exposure time ~~(#7)~~S107. Then, the distance measuring sensor 27 is stopped ~~(#8)~~S108, and an image of the cheek is taken in accordance

with the calculated exposure time so as to obtain an image including the cheek ~~(#9)~~S109.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 19, with the following paragraph:

If a cheek does not appear at the front face of the image taking device 1 and an instruction is issued to stop taking an image (No in ~~#4~~S104 and Yes in ~~#11~~S111), the distance measuring sensor 27 is stopped ~~(#12)~~S112 and the automatic shooting process is stopped. If a cheek does not appear at the front face of the image taking device 1 but there is no instruction to stop taking an image (No in ~~#4~~S104 and No in ~~#11~~S111), an image of the background is taken if necessary (for example, if a few minutes have passed since the last time of taking an image of the background) ~~(#13)~~S113.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 29, with the following paragraph:

After obtaining the image including the cheek in Step ~~#9~~S109, an image that includes only the cheek is extracted from the image ~~(#10)~~S110.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 2, with the following paragraph:

A user who wants to use the personal computer 6 turns on the switch of the personal computer 6. Then, a log-on screen is displayed on the personal computer 6. Here, the user enters his or her user ID ~~(#21)~~S121, and lets the image taking device 1 take an image of his or her left cheek ~~(#22)~~S121. The entered user ID and image data obtained by taking the image are transmitted to the personal computer 6.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 9, with the following paragraph:

The personal computer 6 searches characteristic information 71 corresponding to the user ID from the characteristic information database 6DB ~~(#23)~~S123. Then, the personal computer 6 determines whether or not the user is a regular user by determining whether or not the characteristics of blood vessels indicated by the characteristic information 71 match the characteristics of blood vessels indicated by the image data obtained by taking the image ~~(#24)~~S124.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 17, with the following paragraph:

If it is determined that the user is a regular user (Yes in ~~#25~~ S125), the user can log on for using the personal computer 6 (~~#26~~) S126. If the user is not determined to be a regular user (No in ~~#25~~ S125), a message indicating that the user cannot log on and urging the user to operate again is displayed (~~#27~~) S127.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 22, with the following paragraph:

Alternatively, it is possible that the personal computer 6 discriminates who is the user by performing the process in Step ~~#24~~ S124 sequentially for the characteristic information 71a, 71b, . . . stored in the characteristic information database 6DB, so as to determine to permit the log-on or not. In this case, it is not necessary to enter the user ID in the log-on screen.